IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant : Jonathan D. Herbach, et al.   Art Unit   : 2433
Serial No. : 10/699,520   Examiner : Carl G. Colin
Filed   : October 31, 2003   Conf. No. : 4224

Title   : DISTRIBUTED DOCUMENT VERSION CONTROL

Mail Stop Appeal Brief - Patents
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

<u>BRIEF ON APPEAL</u>

Sir:

This Appeal Brief is submitted under 37 CFR 41.37, thereby perfecting the Notice of

Appeal filed in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office on February 12, 2010.

The sections required by 37 CFR 41.37 follow.

(1)   **Real Party in Interest**

This application is assigned of record to Adobe Systems Incorporated who is hence the

real party in interest.

(2)   **Related Appeals and Interferences**

There are no known related appeals or inteferences.

(3)   **Status of Claims**

Claims 2, 3, 6-10, 12-18, 20, 22, 24-33, 35, 37-41, and 47-56 are pending. Claims 2, 16,

24, 31, and 39 are independent. Claims 2, 3, 6-10, 12-18, 20, 22, 24-33, 35, 37-41, and 47-56

stand rejected. Claims 1, 4, 5, 11, 19, 21, 23, 34, 36, and 42-46 were previously cancelled.

Claims 2, 3, 6-10, 12-18, 20, 22, 24-33, 35, 37-41, and 47-56 are appealed herein.

(4)   Status of Amendments

The claims have not been amended subsequent to final rejection. There are no unentered amendments officially filed after final rejection.

(5)   Summary of Claimed Subject Matter

The present claims define systems and techniques relating to distributed document version control. Independent claim 2 is directed to a method comprising: receiving a request from a client, at a server comprising a computer system including a hardware processor, to take an action with respect to a distributed electronic document retained locally at the client;[1] identifying, at the server and in response to the request, information associated with the distributed electronic document, the associated information comprising user-dependent association information indicating a second electronic document different from the distributed electronic document;[2] and imparting information concerning the second electronic document to force the action to be taken with respect to the second electronic document;[3] wherein imparting the second document information comprises relating the second document information from the

---

[1] *See e.g.,* Specification at page 38, lines 22-23; FIG. 15 at 1500; Specification at page 39, lines 9-12; FIG. 16 at 1610-1640.
[2] *See e.g.,* Specification at page 38, lines 23-28; FIG. 15 at 1510; Specification at page 39, lines 12-14; FIG. 16 at 1645 & 1650.
[3] *See e.g.,* Specification at page 38, lines 28-29; FIG. 15 at 1520; Specification at page 39, lines 14-20; FIG. 16 at 1655.

server to the client, the second electronic document indicated by the user-dependent association

information being dependent on an identified user at the client.[4]

Dependent claim 8 is directed to the method of claim 7, where the document-permissions

information specifies access permissions at a level of granularity smaller than the distributed

electronic document within the distributed document.[5]

Dependent claim 9 is directed to the method of claim 6, where the distributed electronic

document is a stub document identified as outdated when originally sent for distribution.[6]

Dependent claim 10 is directed to the method of claim 9, where obtaining the second

electronic document further comprises generating at least a portion of the second electronic

document based on the identified user.[7]

Independent claim 16 is directed to a method comprising: opening, at a client comprising

a computer including a hardware processor, a locally retained distributed document;[8] contacting

a document control server identified from the distributed document;[9] and forcing use, at the

client, of a second document in place of the distributed document, with respect to at least one

document action, based on information received from the document control server;[10] wherein the

second document comprises a later version of the distributed document, and forcing use

comprises transparently closing the distributed document and opening the second document.[11]

---

[4] *See e.g.*, Specification at page 39, lines 1-8; Specification at page 40, lines 1-4; FIG. 16 at 1610, 1645 & 1650.
[5] *See e.g.*, Specification at page 17, line 28, to page 18, line 3; FIG. 5 at 550.
[6] *See e.g.*, Specification at page 40, lines 3-9; FIG. 16 at 1640.
[7] *See e.g.*, Specification at page 39, line 27, to page 41, line 2; FIG. 16 at 1650.
[8] *See e.g.*, Specification at page 40, lines 13-16; FIG. 17 at 1700.
[9] *See e.g.*, Specification at page 40, lines 16-18; FIG. 17 at 1710.
[10] *See e.g.*, Specification at page 40, lines 18-27; FIG. 17 at 1720.
[11] *See e.g.*, Specification at page 39, lines 17-23.

Dependent claim 20 is directed to the method of claim 16, where forcing use further comprises transparently overwriting the distributed document with the second document.[12]

Independent claim 24 is directed to a software product tangibly embodied in a machine-readable medium,[13] the software product comprising instructions operable to cause one or more data processing apparatus to perform operations comprising: receiving a request from a client, at a server, to take an action with respect to a distributed electronic document retained locally at the client;[14] identifying, at the server and in response to the request, information associated with the distributed electronic document, the associated information comprising user-dependent association information indicating a second electronic document different from and associated with the distributed electronic document;[15] and imparting information concerning the second electronic document to force the action to be taken with respect to the second electronic document;[16] wherein imparting the second document information comprises relating the second document information from the server to the client, the second electronic document indicated by the user-dependent association information being dependent on an identified user at the client.[17]

Dependent claim 28 is directed to the product of claim 26, where the distributed electronic document is a stub document identified as outdated when originally sent for distribution.[18]

---

[12] *See e.g.,* Specification at page 38, lines 28-29; FIG. 15 at 1520; Specification at page 39, lines 14-23; FIG. 16 at 1655.
[13] *See e.g.,* Specification at page 46, line 13, to page 47, line 8.
[14] *See e.g.,* Specification at page 38, lines 22-23; FIG. 15 at 1500; Specification at page 39, lines 9-12; FIG. 16 at 1610-1640.
[15] *See e.g.,* Specification at page 38, lines 23-28; FIG. 15 at 1510; Specification at page 39, lines 12-14; FIG. 16 at 1645 & 1650.
[16] *See e.g.,* Specification at page 38, lines 28-29; FIG. 15 at 1520; Specification at page 39, lines 14-20; FIG. 16 at 1655.
[17] *See e.g.,* Specification at page 39, lines 1-8; Specification at page 40, lines 1-4; FIG. 16 at 1610, 1645 & 1650.
[18] *See e.g.,* Specification at page 40, lines 3-9; FIG. 16 at 1640.

Dependent claim 29 is directed to the product of claim 28, where obtaining the second electronic document further comprises generating at least a portion of the second electronic document based on the identified user.[19]

Independent claim 31 is directed to a software product tangibly embodied in a machine-readable medium,[20] the software product comprising instructions operable to cause one or more data processing apparatus to perform operations comprising: opening a locally retained distributed document;[21] contacting a document control server identified from the distributed document;[22] and forcing use of a second document in place of the distributed document, with respect to at least one document action, based on information received from the document control server;[23] wherein the second document comprises a later version of the distributed document, and forcing use comprises transparently closing the distributed document and opening the second document.[24]

Dependent claim 35 is directed to the product of claim 31, where forcing use further comprises transparently overwriting the distributed document with the second document.[25]

Independent claim 39 is directed to a system comprising: a client comprising a computer including a hardware processor operable to send a request when an action is to be taken with respect to a distributed electronic document local to the client;[26] and a server comprising a computer system including a hardware processor operable to receive the request, and in response

---

[19] *See e.g.,* Specification at page 39, line 27, to page 41, line 2; FIG. 16 at 1650.
[20] *See e.g.,* Specification at page 46, line 13, to page 47, line 8.
[21] *See e.g.,* Specification at page 40, lines 13-16; FIG. 17 at 1700.
[22] *See e.g.,* Specification at page 40, lines 16-18; FIG. 17 at 1710.
[23] *See e.g.,* Specification at page 40, lines 18-27; FIG. 17 at 1720.
[24] *See e.g.,* Specification at page 39, lines 17-23.
[25] *See e.g.,* Specification at page 38, lines 28-29; FIG. 15 at 1520; Specification at page 39, lines 14-23; FIG. 16 at 1655.
[26] *See e.g.,* Specification at page at page 39, lines 9-12; FIG. 16 at 1610 & 1640; Specification at page 40, lines 13-18; FIG. 17 at 1700 & 1710.

to the client, the server being operable to identify information associated with the distributed

electronic document, the associated information comprising user-dependent association

information indicating a second electronic document different from and associated with the

distributed electronic document, the server being operable to relate information concerning the

second electronic document to the client to force the action to be taken with respect to the second

electronic document, the second electronic document indicated by the user-dependent association

information being dependent on an identified user at the client.[27]

Dependent claim 48 is directed to the product of claim 27, where the document-

permissions information specifies access permissions at a level of granularity smaller than the

distributed electronic document within the distributed document.[28]

Dependent claim 53 is directed to the system of claim 52, where the document-

permissions information specifies access permissions at a level of granularity smaller than the

distributed electronic document within the distributed document.[29]

Dependent claim 54 is directed to the system of claim 39, where the distributed electronic

document is a stub document identified as outdated when originally sent for distribution.[30]

Dependent claim 55 is directed to the system of claim 54, where the server is operable to

generate at least a portion of the second electronic document based on the identified user.[31]

---

[27] *See e.g.,* Specification at page 38, lines 23, to page 40, line 4; FIG. 15 at 1510 &1520; FIG. 16 at 1620, 1645, 1650 & 1655;
[28] *See e.g.,* Specification at page 17, line 28, to page 18, line 3; FIG. 5 at 550.
[29] *See e.g.,* Specification at page 17, line 28, to page 18, line 3; FIG. 5 at 550.
[30] *See e.g.,* Specification at page 40, lines 3-9; FIG. 16 at 1640.
[31] *See e.g.,* Specification at page 39, line 27, to page 41, line 2; FIG. 16 at 1650.

(6)   Grounds of Rejection to be Reviewed on Appeal

Grounds of Rejection I

Claims 2-3, 6-8, 12-15, 24-27, 30, 39-41, 47-53, and 56 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C.

103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over US Patent 6,694,434 to McGee et al. in view of US

Patent 7,062,765 to Pitzel et al.[32]

Grounds of Rejection II

Claims 16-18, 20, 22, 31-33, 35, and 37-38 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as

allegedly being unpatentable over McGee.

Grounds of Rejection III

Claims 9, 10, 28, 29, 54, and 55 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being

unpatentable over McGee in view of Pitzel and further in view of US Patent Publications US

2002/0078081 to Bierbrauer et al.

(7)   Argument

Grounds of Rejection I

Claims 2-3, 6-8, 12-15, 24-27, 30, 39-41, 47-53, and 56

Independent claim 2 recites, "receiving a request from a client, at a server comprising a

computer system including a hardware processor, to take an action with respect to a distributed

electronic document retained locally at the client; identifying, at the server and in response to the

---

[32] It should be noted that claims 16-18, 20, 22, 31-33, 35, and 37-38 are listed in the rejection over McGee and Pitzel
but are not substantively addressed in the actual rejection of claims (*see* 11-13-2009 Office Action at pages 4-15.);
thus, the inclusion of these claim numbers in the statement of rejection appears to be a typographical error.

Applicant : Jonathan D. Herbach, et al.   Attorney's Docket No.: 07844-0622001 / P571
Serial No. : 10/699,520
Filed : October 31, 2003
Page : 8 of 25

request, information associated with the distributed electronic document, the associated

information comprising <u>user-dependent association information indicating a second electronic</u>

<u>document different from the distributed electronic document</u>; and imparting information

concerning the second electronic document to force the action to be taken with respect to the

second electronic document; wherein imparting the second document information comprises

relating the second document information from the server to the client, <u>the second electronic</u>

<u>document indicated by the user-dependent association information being dependent on an</u>

<u>identified user at the client.</u>"[33] Thus, the claim language makes clear that the user-dependent

association information indicates the second electronic document is to be used in place of the

distributed document, and that the second electronic document indicated by the user-dependent

association information is <u>dependent on an identified user at the client</u>.

   In stark contrast, the user specific privileges information in McGee controls whether or

not a particular program is allowed to run,[34] but not which second document is provided at a

client, as recited in the claims. The Office acknowledges that McGee is deficient[35] and states:[36]

> Applicant argues that McGee does not disclose the second electronic document (i.e. the
> new version or updated document) indicated by the user-dependent association information
> being dependent on an identified user at the client. However, Applicant's IDS 7,062,765 by
> Pitzel et al discloses the client profile contains client conditions which include the user identifier,
> and the user identifier may be used to determine each component or version to be downloaded to
> the client when an upgrade is requested (see column 8, line 64 through column 9, line 15 and
> column 9, lines 54-65; and column 10, lines 2-12).

---

[33] *See* Claim 2 (emphasis added).
[34] *See e.g.,* McGee at col. 6, lines 19-67.
[35] *See* 11-13-2009 Office Action at pages 5-6.
[36] *See* 11-13-2009 Office Action at page 2.

However, Pitzel does not cure the deficiency of McGee. Pitzel does not draw a distinction

between the client computer and the "user", as done in the presently claimed subject matter. In

fact, Pitzel explicitly states that, "The user identification field 320 contains a unique identifier

that uniquely identifies the client computer 104."[37] The specific examples given by Pitzel also

make clear that the "user identification number" in Pitzel corresponds to the client "user"

computer, not an identified user at the client computer.[38]

Since Pitzel does not cure the deficiency of McGee, and since independent claims 24 and

39 recite similar language as addressed above with respect to independent claim 2, the rejection

of claims 2-3, 6-8, 12-15, 24-27, 30, 39-41, 47-53, and 56 over McGee and Pitzel (i.e., Grounds

of Rejection I) should be overturned for at least the above reasons.

Claims 8, 48, and 53

Claims 8, 48, and 53 specify that the level of granularity is smaller than the distributed

electronic document within the distributed document (e.g., controlling access to specific page(s),

paragraph(s) and/or word(s) in the document).[39] The cited portion of McGee[40] describes limiting

execution privileges based on time of day, device, user or resources to be accessed on a

computer, but fails to teach or suggest access permissions at a level of granularity smaller than a

distributed electronic document within the distributed document.

The Office notes that McGee discloses read/write controls on various file structures,

pointing out that the calling application in McGee may be "constrained to specific privileges

---

[37] See Pitzel at col. 6, line 66, to col. 7, line 1.
[38] See Pitzel at col. 9, lines 12-22.
[39] See e.g., Specification at page 17, line 20, to page 18, line 3.
[40] See McGee at col. 6, lines 12-14 & 56-67.

such as read/write controls on various file structures [.]"[41] However, this is clearly referring to

limits on the program's ability to read and write to files in the file system of the computer, not to

limits imposed by access permissions for portions of the program itself. In response to this point,

the Office notes that, "McGee discloses constraints on the program itself because the program is

not fully executable[.]"[42] While this is true, it does not address the claim language since it does

not address how the constraints on the program itself are considered to be "at a level of

granularity smaller than the distributed electronic document within the distributed document."

McGee describes limiting when a program can be executed and limiting what the program can

access when it is allowed to execute, but McGee does not describe specifying different sub-

portions of the program that can be limited in different fashions. Thus, the claim language,

"wherein the document-permissions information specifies access permissions at a level of

granularity smaller than the distributed electronic document within the distributed document"

cannot be considered as reading on McGee. Therefore, the rejection of claims 8, 48, and 53 over

McGee and Pitzel, in Grounds of Rejection I, should be overturned for at least these additional

reasons.

Grounds of Rejection II

  Claims 16-18, 20, 22, 31-33, 35, and 37-38

  Independent claim 16 recites, "opening, at a client comprising a computer including a

hardware processor, a locally retained distributed document; contacting a document control

server identified from the distributed document; and forcing use, at the client, of a second

---

[41] See 11-13-2009 Office Action at page 6.
[42] See 11-13-2009 Office Action at page 2.

document in place of the distributed document, with respect to at least one document action,

based on information received from the document control server; wherein the second document

comprises a later version of the distributed document, and <u>forcing use comprises transparently</u>

<u>closing the distributed document and opening the second document</u>."[43] The Office has taken

Official Notice regarding this subject matter, and asserts that "closing of the application

automatically without the user performing the closing meets the recitation of transparently."[44]

However, closing of the application automatically without the user performing the closing is not

sufficient to meet the claim language since "automatically" is not equivalent to "transparently"

within the context of the claim. The Office addresses this point by stating:[45]

> Examiner asserts that "transparently closing the document" may be interpreted
> broadly in the art to mean "not requiring the closing of the document to be
> performed explicitly by the user".

However, under the Office's own reasoning, "closing the document" may also be interpreted to

mean "not requiring the closing of the document to be performed explicitly by the user." Since

the Office's claim construction renders the word "transparently" superfluous, this claim

construction is inappropriate under applicable law.[46] Thus, the word "transparently" must be

assigned meaning, namely that the closing of the distributed document and the opening the

second document are done without the user being aware of this forced use of the second

document.

---

[43] *See* Claim 16 (emphasis added).
[44] *See* 11-13-2009 Office Action at pages 3, 15, and 16.
[45] *See* 11-13-2009 Office Action at page 3.
[46] *See Pickholtz v. Rainbow Techs., Inc.*, 284 F.3d 1365, 1373 (Fed. Cir. 2002), *citing Elekta Instrument S.A. v. O.U.R. Scientific International, Inc.*, 214 F.3d 1302, 1307 (Fed. Cir. 2000).

Similar reasoning applies to independent claim 31 and the claims dependent from claims

16 and 31. Thus, the rejection of claims 16-18, 20, 22, 31-33, 35, 37, and 38 over McGee (i.e.,

Grounds of Rejection II) should be overturned for at least the above reasons.

Claims 20 and 35

Dependent claims 20 and 35 recite, "transparently overwriting the distributed document

with the second document." The cited portions of McGee[47] say nothing about overwriting, as

claimed, and upgrading to a new version of a program does not implicitly include transparently

overwriting a distributed document as recited in these claims. Thus, the rejection of claims 20

and 35 over McGee, in Grounds of Rejection II, should be overturned for at least the above

reasons.

Grounds of Rejection III

Claims 9, 10, 28, 29, 54, and 55

Bierbrauer describes a technique for handling document or content off-loading from a

document processing system, but fails to cure the deficiencies of McGee. Thus, since claims 9,

10, 28, 29, 54, and 55 depend generally from independent claims 2, 24, and 39, the rejection of

claims 9, 10, 28, 29, 54, and 55 over McGee, Pitzel and Bierbrauer (i.e., Grounds of Rejection

III) should be overturned for at least the reasons presented under Grounds of Rejection I.

---

[47] *See* McGee at col. 2, lines 35-41, and col. 12, lines 45-63.

In addition, claims 9, 28, and 54 recite, "wherein the distributed electronic document is a stub document identified as outdated when originally sent for distribution."[48] McGee fails to teach or suggest this subject matter. The Office asserts that McGee's disclosure of "identifying document as having a new version being released and identifying a new version is available, which implies that the latest version is outdated that reads on the claimed limitation the distributed document identified as outdated (see column 12, lines 36-42)[.]"[49] However, this contention should be overturned since it fails to address the actual claim language.

The claims specify that the distributed electronic document is a stub document identified as outdated <u>when originally sent for distribution</u>. McGee does not teach or suggest this subject matter since the programs are fully functional, without any update version of the program being available, when they are originally distributed. Nothing McGee suggests otherwise, and the Office's note that when a new version is released the old version is outdated fails to actually address this aspect of the claimed subject matter, which specifies that stub document is identified as outdated <u>when originally sent for distribution</u>. For at least this reason, the proposed combination of Bierbrauer with McGee and Pitzel is improper, and the rejection of claims 9, 10, 28, 29, 54, and 55 over McGee, Pitzel and Bierbrauer (i.e., Grounds of Rejection III) should be overturned.

Claims 10, 29, and 55

Claims 10, 29, and 55 recite generating "at least a portion of the second electronic document based on the identified user." The Office cites to column 8, line 64 through column 9,

---

[48] *See e.g.,* Specification at ¶ [0141].
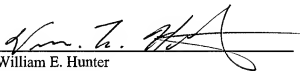[49] *See* 11-13-2009 Office Action at page 17.

line 15; column 9, lines 54-65; and column 10, lines 2-12 of Pitzel.[50] However, these portions of

Pitzel provide no disclosure at all that can be considered to correspond to generating at least a

portion of the second electronic document based on the identified user, as claimed, and the

Office has provided no explanation for the rejection of these claims. Thus, the rejection of

claims 10, 29, and 55 over McGee, Pitzel and Bierbrauer, in Grounds of Rejection III, should be

overturned for at least this additional reason.

Please apply the one month extension of time fee, the appeal brief fee, and any other

necessary charges or credits to Deposit Account No. 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: _May 12, 2010_   William E. Hunter
Reg. No. 47,671

Customer Number 21876
Fish & Richardson P.C.
Telephone: (858) 678-5070
Facsimile: (877) 769-7945

10983831.doc

---

[50] *See* 11-13-2009 Office Action at page 18.

Appendix of Claims

1.   (Cancelled)

2.   (Previously Presented) A method comprising:

receiving a request from a client, at a server comprising a computer system including a hardware processor, to take an action with respect to a distributed electronic document retained locally at the client;

identifying, at the server and in response to the request, information associated with the distributed electronic document, the associated information comprising user-dependent association information indicating a second electronic document different from the distributed electronic document; and

imparting information concerning the second electronic document to force the action to be taken with respect to the second electronic document;

wherein imparting the second document information comprises relating the second document information from the server to the client, the second electronic document indicated by the user-dependent association information being dependent on an identified user at the client.

3.   (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein relating the second document information comprises sending the second document information to the client to allow the client to obtain the second document.

4.   (Cancelled)

5.   (Cancelled)

6.   (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein relating the second document information comprises:

obtaining the second electronic document; and

sending the second electronic document to the client.

7.   (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein the second electronic document comprises a later version of the distributed electronic document, and the associated information comprises document-permissions information specifying that the action is not permitted with respect to the distributed electronic document at the client.

8.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 7, wherein the document-permissions information specifies access permissions at a level of granularity smaller than the distributed electronic document within the distributed document.

9.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 6, wherein the distributed electronic document is a stub document identified as outdated when originally sent for distribution.

10.   (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein obtaining the second electronic document further comprises generating at least a portion of the second electronic document based on the identified user.

11.   (Cancelled)

12.   (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein the distributed electronic document comprises a software program, the second electronic document comprises a later version of the software program, and the action comprises running the software program.

13.   (Original) The method of claim 2, further comprising:
accessing the distributed electronic document at the client;
identifying an address of the server and a document identifier in the distributed electronic document;
sending the document identifier and the requested action to the server using the address; and
replacing the distributed document, at the client, with the second document.

14.   (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein replacing the distributed document comprises performing the action with respect to the second document.

15.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the second document includes the address of the server and a second document identifier, and replacing the distributed document further comprises automatically and without user awareness writing over the distributed document with the second document in a storage device.

16.   (Previously Presented) A method comprising:

opening, at a client comprising a computer including a hardware processor, a locally retained distributed document;

contacting a document control server identified from the distributed document; and

forcing use, at the client, of a second document in place of the distributed document, with respect to at least one document action, based on information received from the document control server;

wherein the second document comprises a later version of the distributed document, and forcing use comprises transparently closing the distributed document and opening the second document.

17.   (Original) The method of claim 16, further comprising obtaining the second document based on the received information.

18.   (Original) The method of claim 16, wherein the received information comprises the second document.

19.   (Cancelled)

20.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16, wherein forcing use further comprises transparently overwriting the distributed document with the second document.

21.   (Cancelled)

22.   (Original) The method of claim 16, wherein the distributed document comprises a software program, the second document comprises a later version of the software program, and the at least one document action comprises running the software program.

23.   (Cancelled)

24.   (Previously Presented) A software product tangibly embodied in a machine-readable medium, the software product comprising instructions operable to cause one or more data processing apparatus to perform operations comprising:

        receiving a request from a client, at a server, to take an action with respect to a distributed electronic document retained locally at the client;

        identifying, at the server and in response to the request, information associated with the distributed electronic document, the associated information comprising user-dependent association information indicating a second electronic document different from and associated with the distributed electronic document; and

        imparting information concerning the second electronic document to force the action to be taken with respect to the second electronic document;

        wherein imparting the second document information comprises relating the second document information from the server to the client, the second electronic document indicated by the user-dependent association information being dependent on an identified user at the client.

25.   (Original) The software product of claim 24, wherein relating the second document information comprises sending the second document information to the client to allow the client to obtain the second document.

26.   (Original) The software product of claim 24, wherein relating the second document information comprises:

        obtaining the second electronic document; and

sending the second electronic document to the client.

27. (Original) The software product of claim 26, wherein the second electronic document comprises a later version of the distributed electronic document, and the associated information comprises document-permissions information specifying that the action is not permitted with respect to the distributed electronic document at the client.

28. (Previously Presented) The software product of claim 26, wherein the distributed electronic document is a stub document identified as outdated when originally sent for distribution.

29. (Original) The software product of claim 28, wherein obtaining the second electronic document further comprises generating at least a portion of the second electronic document based on the identified user.

30. (Original) The software product of claim 26, wherein the distributed electronic document comprises a software program, the second electronic document comprises a later version of the software program, and the action comprises running the software program.

31. (Previously Presented) A software product tangibly embodied in a machine-readable medium, the software product comprising instructions operable to cause one or more data processing apparatus to perform operations comprising:

opening a locally retained distributed document;

contacting a document control server identified from the distributed document; and

forcing use of a second document in place of the distributed document, with respect to at least one document action, based on information received from the document control server;

wherein the second document comprises a later version of the distributed document, and forcing use comprises transparently closing the distributed document and opening the second document.

32.   (Original) The software product of claim 31, wherein the operations further comprise obtaining the second document based on the received information.

33.   (Original) The software product of claim 31, wherein the received information comprises the second document.

34.   (Cancelled)

35.   (Previously Presented) The software product of claim 31, wherein forcing use further comprises transparently overwriting the distributed document with the second document.

36.   (Cancelled)

37.   (Previously Presented) The software product of claim 31, wherein the received information comprises document-permissions information specifying access permissions at a level of granularity smaller than the distributed document within the distributed document.

38.   (Original) The software product of claim 31, wherein the distributed document comprises a software program, the second document comprises a later version of the software program, and the at least one document action comprises running the software program.

39.   (Previously Presented) A system comprising:
       a client comprising a computer including a hardware processor operable to send a request when an action is to be taken with respect to a distributed electronic document local to the client; and
       a server comprising a computer system including a hardware processor operable to receive the request, and in response to the client, the server being operable to identify information associated with the distributed electronic document, the associated information comprising user-dependent association information indicating a second electronic document different from and associated with the distributed electronic document, the server being operable

to relate information concerning the second electronic document to the client to force the action to be taken with respect to the second electronic document, the second electronic document indicated by the user-dependent association information being dependent on an identified user at the client.

40.   (Original) The system of claim 39, wherein the server comprises:

a server core with configuration and logging components;

an internal services component that provides functionality across dynamically loaded methods; and

dynamically loaded external service providers, including one or more access control service providers.

41.   (Original) The system of claim 39, further comprising:

a business logic tier comprising a cluster of document control servers, including the server;

an application tier including the client comprising a viewer client, a securing client, and an administration client; and

a load balancer that routes client requests to the document control servers.

42-46. (Cancelled)

47.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16, wherein the document-permissions information specifies access permissions at a level of granularity smaller than the distributed document within the distributed document.

48.   (Previously Presented) The software product of claim 27, wherein the document-permissions information specifies access permissions at a level of granularity smaller than the distributed electronic document within the distributed document.

49.   (Previously Presented) The software product of claim 24, wherein the operations further comprise:

accessing the distributed electronic document at the client;

identifying an address of the server and a document identifier in the distributed electronic document;

sending the document identifier and the requested action to the server using the address; and

replacing the distributed document, at the client, with the second document.

50.   (Previously Presented) The software product of claim 49, wherein replacing the distributed document comprises performing the action with respect to the second document.

51.   (Previously Presented) The software product of claim 50, wherein the second document includes the address of the server and a second document identifier, and replacing the distributed document further comprises automatically and without user awareness writing over the distributed document with the second document in a storage device.

52.   (Previously Presented) The system of claim 39, wherein the second electronic document comprises a later version of the distributed electronic document, and the associated information comprises document-permissions information specifying that the action is not permitted with respect to the distributed electronic document at the client.

53.   (Previously Presented) The system of claim 52, wherein the document-permissions information specifies access permissions at a level of granularity smaller than the distributed electronic document within the distributed document.

54.   (Previously Presented) The system of claim 39, wherein the distributed electronic document is a stub document identified as outdated when originally sent for distribution.

55.   (Previously Presented) The system of claim 54, wherein the server is operable to generate at least a portion of the second electronic document based on the identified user.

56.   (Previously Presented) The system of claim 39, wherein the client is operable to identify an address of the server and a document identifier in the distributed electronic document, send the document identifier and the requested action to the server using the address, and replace the distributed document, at the client, with the second document by automatically and without user awareness writing over the distributed document with the second document in a storage device.

Evidence Appendix

None.

Related Proceedings Appendix

None.